CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 23 MAY 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING, ON BEHALF OF BRAZIL, EGYPT, IRELAND, MEXICO, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH AFRICA AND SWEDEN, A PORTION OF THE TEXT ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS BY THE 2000 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, REGARDING PRACTICAL STEPS FOR THE SYSTEMATIC AND PROGRESSIVE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT ARTICLE VI OF THE TREATY

On behalf of the delegations of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden I have the honour to inform you that the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons adopted by consensus, in its Final Document, practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the Treaty.

These steps read as follows:

"15. The Conference agrees on the following practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament":

1. The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

2. A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of that Treaty.

3. The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years.

4. The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body.

5. The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures.

6. An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States parties are committed under Article VI.

7. The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions.

8. The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

9. Steps by all the nuclear-weapon States leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

   - Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally.

   - Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to the nuclear-weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to Article VI and as a voluntary-confidence building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament.

   - The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.

   - Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems.

   - A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.

   - The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.

10. Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside of military programmes.

11. Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

12. Regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", and recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

13. The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world."

We request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Antonio de Icaza
Ambassador
Permanent Representative